By the King.

A Proclamation for reſtraint of killing, dreſsing, and eating of Fleſh in Lent, or on Fiſh dayes, appointed by the Law, to be hereafter ſtrictly obſerued by all ſorts of people.

WHereas, for the benefit and commoditie of this Our Realme of England, as well in the maintenance of Our Naute and Shipping (a principall ſtrength of this Iland) as for the ſparing and increaſe of Fleſh victuall, diuers good Lawes and Statutes haue beene prouided, for the due obſeruation of Lent, and other dayes appointed for Fiſh dayes, which from time to time haue beene ſeconded and quickned by ſundry Our Proclamations, and other Actes and Ordinances of State; And whereas, notwithſtanding the many good prouiſions heretofore had and made in that kind, wee yet find the inordinate libertie, now vſually taken by all ſorts of people to kill, dreſſe, and eate Fleſh in the Lent ſeaſon, and on other dayes and times prohibited by Law, is become an euill of ſuch inueterate growth, as it requireth more then ordinarie care to ſuppreſſe the ſame:

Wee therefore much affecting the Reformation of this ſo great an euill (and enemy to the plenty of Our Kingdomes) haue thought fit eftſoones (and thus timely, the better to take away the excuſe, and to preuent the prouiſions of Fleſh that vſually men make againſt the Lent ſeaſon) To expreſſe Our ſelfe and Our Royall Commandement in this behalfe: wherein, without any future declaration of Our pleaſure in this kind, Wee ſhall expect and require from all Our Subiects, that due Notice be taken, and that a ſtrict and continued obedience and conformitie bee yeelded thereunto in all ſucceeding times.

And therefore wee doe ſtraitly Charge and Command all and euery perſon and perſons whatſoeuer, to whom it may appertaine, carefully to prouide and ſee, that theſe Orders following may bee duely obſerued and put in execution, vpon paine of Our high diſpleaſure, and ſuch penalties, as by the Lawes of this Our Realme may be inflicted vpon the Offenders, for their contempt or neglect of Us and Our Lawes, whereof we ſhall ſhew Our ſelues moſt ſenſible.

And firſt, whereas Wee finde, that the chiefeſt cauſe of theſe diſorders hath growen from the Licences that haue beene granted to Butchers, to kill and vtter Fleſh contrary to Law, And that by Our Lawes, no Mayor, Juſtice of Peace, or other perſon of what degree or qualitie ſoeuer, can grant any Licence in this kinde, And that the Lords and others of Our Priuie Councell do by Our direction forbeare to grant the ſame, or to giue way thereunto; Our Will and pleaſure is vpon the penalties prouided by Law, and ſuch further puniſhment to be inflicted vpon the offenders, as ſhall be thought meete, that no ſuch Licence ſhall bee granted for the killing or vttering of Fleſh; And that no Butcher or other perſon whatſoeuer, doe by colour thereof, kill, vtter, or put to ſale any Fleſh contrary to the Lawes eſtabliſhed and prouided in that behalfe.

And for the auoiding of ſuch inconueniences hereafter, Our will and pleaſure is, That the Lord Maior of Our City of London, and euery other Officer and Juſtice of Peace, ſhall call before them, and ſend for any of the ſeruants of any Inholders, Victuallers, Cookes, Alehouſekeepers, Tauerners, and keepers of Ordinarie tables, and ſuch others that vtter victuals, and to examine them vpon their corporall Oathes, what Fleſh is, or hath beene, during the Lent ſeaſon, or other dayes prohibited by the Law, dreſſed, killed, vttered, or eaten in their houſes, which if they ſhall refuſe to doe, then to commit to priſon the ſaid ſeruants ſo refuſing vpon their Oathes to declare the trueth.

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That the Lord Mayor shall also yeerely before Lent, or at the beginning thereof, cause all Inholders, Keepers of Ordinary Tables, Victuallers, Alehouse keepers, and Tauerners within the City and Liberties thereof, to appeare before him, or such persons as he shall appoint meete for that purpose; And shall take Recognizances with sufficient Sureties of euery of them in good summes of money, (viz.) One hundred pounds of the Principall, and their Sureties thirtie pounds apiece, to Our vse, not to dresse any Flesh in their Houses in the Lent time, or at other times prohibited, for any respect, nor sutter it to bee eaten contrary to Law. The like Recognizance with Sureties, shall be taken of the like parties vpon like penalties, by the Justices of Peace of Our Citie of Westminster, and the Liberties thereof; and euery of the said Recognizances to be certified into Our Exchequer.

And for the Butchers, & others that come with victuall of Flesh out of the Countrey into the City, Our pleasure is, That the Lord Maior shall cause certaine persons to watch at the Gates and other like places in the Suburbs, where Flesh may bee brought, to view and search, and to intercept the same: And if any of those watchmen shall be found negligent and corrupt in his Charge, then he to be committed to Prison during the whole Lent.

And to the end that Fishermen may imploy themselues to Sea with better encouragement then heretofore, and that the Fishmongers may furnish themselues with such store from time to time hereafter, as shall be expedient, aswell for the prouision of the Citie, as for selling the same at reasonable Rates; We will that they take notice of this Our Commandement and constant resolution for the obseruance of Lent, and Fish-dayes, both now and hereafter, as by Law is required.

And furthermore, as wee thinke it fit, that euery man should be a rule of order and abstinence in his owne House, as well in respect of the publique, as of his priuate ease and benefit, So wee straitly charge and command all Inholders, Keepers of Ordinary Tables, Victulars, Alehouse-keepers, and Tauerners, not to make any Supper for any person or persons whatsoeuer, vpon Friday nights, either in Lent or out of Lent; nor to suffer any meate to be then dressed, vttered, sold or eaten in their Houses, vpon paine of such punishment, as is due to those that shall contemne Our Royall pleasure and Commandement.

And forasmuch as vpon further aduice and consideration had, that the restraint of killing and dressing of flesh is no sufficient remedie for the mischiefe, vnlesse there bee better care also taken to suppresse the vnlawfull and inordinate eating of Flesh in the time of Lent, and on other dayes and times prohibited, wherewith Our Subiects haue accustomed themselues, rather for delicatie then for necessitie; It is therefore Our Royall will and pleasure, and accordingly Wee doe hereby straitly prohibite and forbid all Our Subiects of what degree or qualitie soeuer within this Our Realme, to eat any manner of Flesh in the time of Lent, or on other dayes now vsually obserued as Fish-dayes, without a speciall Licence first obtained from the Bishop of the Diocesse, or such other as by the Law haue power to giue Licence in that behalfe, (which We will and command shall bee sparingly granted, and in cases of necessitie onely) vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and to be proceeded against by Our Attourney Generall in Our Court of Starre-Chamber, as contemners of Our Royall Commandement, and vpon such further penaltie, as by the Lawes and Statutes of Our Realme may be inflicted on those that shall wilfully offend in this kinde.

And as these Orders are to be executed in the City of London, and places neere to the same, so is Our expresse pleasure and Commandement, That Our Justices of Peace in all Shires within their Rule, and all other Mayors, Bayliffes, and chiefe Officers in Townes corporate, or in any Liberties within their Precincts, shall cause the same to be obserued and performed in like manner; and that no maner of Toleration, Fauour, or Conniuencie be vsed by any Justice of Peace, or other Officer, contrary to the true meaning of this Our Proclamation, as both they that shall presume wittingly so to tolerate the offence, as also the party himselfe offending, will answere the same at their vttermost perils: Our Commandement being, That Our Lawes in this case shall be hereafter seuerely executed vpon all offenders whatsoeuer.

Further charging and commanding the Lord Maior of our City of London, the Justices of Assize in their seuerall Circuits, the Mayors and chiefe Officers of all other Cities and Townes corporate, Justices of Peace, Lords of Liberties, and all other Officers and Ministers within the seuerall Counties of this Our Realme, That they and euery of them fully obey this Our Pleasure, and cause and compell the same to be obeyed and executed by others, as they will answere the contrary at their vttermost perils.

And for the due execution of the Premisses in all other the Counties of this Our Realme, as well as in Our Cities of London and Westminster, Wee doe hereby straitly charge and command all Our Justices of Peace within the same Counties, as well within Liberties as without, That yeerely and euery yeere hereafter before Lent, they cause to come and appeare before them all Inholders,

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Cookes, Tauerners, Alehouſe-keepers, Butchers, and other Victuallers whatſoeuer, and to require and take of them to our vſe, ſeuerall Recognizances, with Sureties, for obſeruation of the premiſſes, (viz) The principals in tenne pounds, and their two Sureties in fiue pounds apiece: And if they ſhall refuſe or neglect to enter into ſuch Recognizances, That then the ſaid Juſtices ſhall ſuppreſſe ſuch perſons ſo refuſing, from victualling any more, and ſhall alſo cauſe them forthwith to become bound by Recognizance with Sureties to our vſe, (viz) The principals in twenty pounds, and their two Sureties in ten pounds apiece, not to Victuall or ſell Beere or Ale from thenceforth; which if they ſhall refuſe to doe, then the ſaid Juſtices to commit to priſon all ſuch perſons ſo refuſing to enter into ſuch Recognizance, vntill they ſhall ſubmit themſelues, and become bound, as aforeſaid. And further for all ſuch Inholders, Cookes, Tauerners, Alehouſe keepers, Butchers, and other Victuallers, as ſhall not appeare before the ſaid Juſtices, as aforeſaid, That they immediatly ſend forth their warrants, or grant Proceſſe againſt them and euery of them ſo making default, to appeare and anſwere their contempt at the next generall Seſſions of the Peace.

And further, for the more due puniſhment of Inholders, Keepers of ordinary Tables, Cookes, Butchers, Victuallers, Alehouſe-keepers, Tauerners, and ſuch like, who ſhall forfeit their Recognizances by killing or dreſſing of Fleſh, or ſuffering it to be eaten in their houſes in the Lent time, and other Fiſh-dayes; And to the end that the ſame may be as well taken in due forme of Law, as duely certified into our Exchequer, we doe will and require all Juſtices of Peace, as well within Liberties as without, That at ſuch times as they ſhall meet within their ſeuerall Diuiſions, for the taking of ſuch Recognizances, that they giue notice to the Clerkes of the Peace, or their Deputies, to attend them for that purpoſe: Of whom we will require a ſtrict Accompt for the Legall taking and returning of the ſame Recognizances into our ſaid Exchequer: The ſaid Clerkes of the Peace and their Deputies, taking for the making and certifying of the ſame Recognizances of all Inne-keepers, Tauerners, Cookes, and Butchers, the Fee of two ſhillings ſixe pence; And of all Alehouſe-keepers the Fee of twelue pence, as is limited to be taken by the Clerke of the Peace for our County of Middleſex for euery ſuch Recognizance, and no more.

And laſtly, for that the Fiſhmongers (vpon the obſeruation of the aforeſaid Orders) may perhaps take occaſion thereby to enhaunce the prices, as well of Freſh, as of Sea Fiſh, we doe therefore hereby further charge and command all Fiſhmongers whatſoeuer, That they ſell and vtter their Fiſh at moderate and vſuall Rates and prices; And that all Juſtices of Peace, Maiors, Bayliffes, and other our Officers, as well within Liberties as without, to whom it ſhall appertaine, ſhall from time to time take ſuch order with the ſaid Fiſhmongers, that our Subiects be not grieued by any ſuch enhauncement or encreaſe of prices vpon Fiſh, vpon paine of our high diſpleaſure, and ſuch further puniſhment as may be inflicted vpon them by our Lawes.

Giuen at Whitehall the ſeuen and twentieth day of December, in the one and twentieth yeere of our Reigne of Great Britaine, France and Ireland.

God ſaue the King.

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